

CURRENT INFORMATION FOR NEVADA NURSERY STOCK DEALERS ABOUT SUDDEN OAK DEATH IN CALIFORNIA

The purpose of this "Alert" is to update Nevada nursery and landscape industry members of recent events in California with regard to Sudden Oak Death (SOD) and its effect on the interstate shipment of nursery stock from California to Nevada.

On March 14, 2004, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) announced that *Phytophthora ramorum*, the causative organism of SOD was found at Monrovia Nursery, a large Los Angeles County wholesale nursery, and at Specialty Plants Inc. in San Diego County. On April 9, 2004 USDA issued an Emergency Order quarantining *all* nurseries in California that ship SOD host and associated host plants.

Nurseries that are free from visual symptoms of SOD will be certified as free-from and allowed under a compliance agreement to resume shipping host plants. Nurseries with plants showing SOD symptoms will be sampled and all host stock held until proven free of SOD.

The following "FAQ" may help you to understand how Nevada businesses may be affected by the increased regulation of interstate shipments of nursery stock from California:

1. What is sudden oak death?

Phytophthora ramorum or "Sudden oak death" (SOD) is a fungus-like plant disease of certain trees, shrubs and other plants. This disease causes fatal bark cankers in several species of oaks and leaf blights on many other species of trees, shrubs and other plants.

2. How is SOD spread?

It is unclear how SOD spreads. Evidence does suggest that infested plants moved interstate will serve as a pathway for introduction of SOD to other areas of the US. It is most likely to develop in certain climate zones and certain weather conditions.

3. What is the difference between a "regulated host plant" and an "associated host"?

A regulated host plant is a plant that has been confirmed by a series of laboratory tests to carry SOD and to be capable of being re-infested with the disease. An "associated host" is a plant on which the disease has been found but has not yet gone through the necessary tests to prove that it can be re-infested with the same disease. For the purposes of the federal SOD quarantine established in 2002, only confirmed

hosts are listed as “regulated”. However, in the current situation, *all* hosts, both regulated and associated, are being restricted.

4. How do I know which plants are regulated?

The list of regulated hosts and associated hosts can be found at www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ispm/sod. You can also contact the Nevada Department of Agriculture for a copy of the list, or visit our website at www.agri.state.nv.us/nursery.

5. Does this mean I can’t get nursery stock from California?

No. You can still order and obtain nursery stock from California. Nurseries located in the 12 counties included in the original federal quarantine (regulated, infested areas) will continue to ship nursery stock in compliance with federal quarantine requirements as they have done since 2002. All other nurseries throughout California (regulated, non-infested areas) are prohibited from shipping any host or associated hosts until their stock has been inspected and found free of SOD symptoms. The nursery will then enter into a compliance agreement with SDFA. Only then will they be allowed to ship nursery stock interstate.

6. I don’t want to buy infested plants from a nursery that hasn’t been inspected. How do I know if it has been inspected?

Nurseries in California that have not been inspected will not be allowed to ship regulated host and associated host plants. Nurseries in California that have been inspected and found free of SOD symptoms will be required to accompany interstate shipments of regulated hosts and associated host material with a federal certificate listing the SOD quarantine by number (7 CFR 301.92). The certificate will also list a “CA” number that is unique to that shipping nursery. Without the certificate, regulated host and associated host plants cannot be shipped interstate.

Nevada businesses should be vigilant in looking for the certificates and refuse shipments that do not have them. The Nevada Department of Agriculture should be immediately contacted if a shipment of regulated or associated host plants arrives from California without the required certificates.

7. Will *all* shipments of nursery stock from California have to have a SOD certificate?

No. Only nurseries that are shipping regulated hosts and associated hosts plants will use the federal SOD certificate. Shipments of non-regulated plants will be accompanied a standard nursery stock inspection certificate. If a Nevada State or a federal quarantine applies, such as potato late blight or European pine shoot moth, certificates of quarantine compliance or phytosanitary certificates must still be used for those shipments.

8. Does the Nevada Department of Agriculture plan to prohibit the shipment of all nursery stock from California?

No. At this time the Department has no such plans.

9. Do SOD host plants from California have to be inspected at my nursery before I can sell or install them?

No. Department staff is currently conducting SOD surveys along with standard nursery inspections, and will continue to do so. If regulated host plants or associated host plants show any symptoms that might be SOD, those plants will be placed on hold for testing and may not be sold until released by the Department.

10. What do the symptoms of SOD look like?

The symptoms of *Phytophthora ramorum* are not well understood on many of the host plants. Photographs of symptoms of the disease on selected host plants can be seen on the Washington State Department of Agriculture's website at <http://www.oda.state.or.us/information/news/Images/SOD/index.htm>.

You are encouraged to contact the Department if you notice what you believe to be symptoms of SOD on any of the host or associated host plants. A list of host plants is available on the Department's website: www.agri.state.nv.us/nursery. Contact Dr. Shouhua Wang, state plant pathologist for the Nevada Department of Agriculture by phone (775) 688-1182 X 246 or by e-mail at shwang@govmail.state.nv.us. You may bring samples to the Department offices in Reno or Las Vegas. Call for directions.

11. Why is it important to stop this disease?

If steps are not taken to confine SOD to areas where it now exists outside of the regulated area and eradicate it in those areas, it is expected that the disease will eventually spread to all areas in the US with host plants and favorable environmental conditions. Because SOD is fatal to many species of oaks this would have potentially devastating results to forests and natural areas, and to the nursery and lumber industries. It would also negatively impact the ability of US companies to ship plants and wood products overseas.

Although it is not known if SOD can become established in Nevada, the disease is of concern because of its wide host range and the potential to infest established plantings in homes, commercial plantings, and parks. In addition, there are plants native to Nevada, such as oaks and manzanita that are related to regulated hosts of SOD and could be infected by infested nursery stock planted in landscapes, re-vegetation projects, or parks.

11. Where can I get more information about SOD?

www.suddenoakdeath.org
www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ispm/sod
www.oda.state.or.us/plant/ppd/path/SOD
http://ncipmc.org/sod/suddenoakdeath_ncipmc.pdf
USDA has a "Sudden Oak Death" hotline: 1-888-703-4457

12. How do I contact the Nevada Department of Agriculture?

State office in Reno: 775-688-1182 extension 246 or 243 or
pgmckie@govmail.state.nv.us
Southern Regional Office in Las Vegas: 702-486-4690 or
lvndoa@govmail.state.nv.us